

# THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

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### AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST LOOKS AT THE CLASSICS \*

It would be pleasant and easy for me to devote this talk to extolling the classics and the study of classics, and I wish I could conceive this to be my task. My personal biography would reveal that I have a certain community of attitude with this audience, for as an undergraduate I was a serious student of the classics, and even up to now I have maintained an interest in classical languages and literature, an interest which I wish I could find more time to indulge. My professional training, however, has been as a research psychologist, and for the past five years I have been associated with a graduate school of education. These circumstances suggest to me that my talk might well be devoted, not to the *value* of the classics, but rather to certain questions about the *teaching* of the classics.

Obviously the classics have value of and for themselves; obviously the classics have value in education. The really thorny questions with

which the educator is concerned have to do with *how* and *where* in education these values should be emphasized, and for what types of students. Before we proceed further it is necessary to consider separately the three chief aspects of classical studies: first, the study of classical civilization; second, the study of classical literature; and third, the study of classical languages.

I believe that an incontrovertible case can be made for teaching something about classical civilization at all levels of education. It has always been, and it will continue to be true, that a fairly extensive knowledge of our debt to Greece and Rome is necessary in any person who is to be considered well educated in Western culture. We desire many of our high school graduates, and certainly nearly all our college graduates, to be so educated. This education can start in the elementary school, perhaps even in the kindergarten, with stories from ancient history and Greek mythology. It can continue in the secondary school, and with greater stress and detail in the college, in ways that need not be described here.

These things, *pari passu*, can be said also about the study of classical literatures. I mean,

\* A paper read before the annual meeting of the Eastern Massachusetts Section of the Classical Association of New England, February 13, 1954.

of course, the study and even more the enjoyment and appreciation of classical literary works in translation. Let us not be afraid of literature in translation. Some teachers of languages, both ancient and modern, have panegyricized the virtues of reading literature in the original tongue to the extent of giving the impression that reading literature in translation is somehow immoral. Certainly it is not immoral; I wonder how many of us read the Old Testament only in the original Hebrew. Nevertheless, the currency of the idea that the reading of literature in translation is a sign of laxity has had the effect, in many cases, that the literature itself simply does not get read, either in the original or in translation. Classicists should, I think, be eager to promote the teaching of literature in translation, both by themselves and by teachers of English and history. What is wrong, for example, with assigning students in ancient history classes readings in Thucydides and Demosthenes?

There is an important reason for teaching classical literature and civilization which I think tends to be overlooked in the present-day trend toward emphasizing "general ideas" and "understanding" as objectives in education rather than subject-matter *per se*. Of course, we hope that the study of classical civilization and literature will lead to "general ideas" and "broad understandings" about Western civilization, but—perhaps as a result of my own classical education—I am sufficiently conservative also to believe in the importance of factual, tangible subject-matter. I choose to entertain the notion that in all fields of knowledge students *want* to know some facts; if only at the level of mere recognition they want to know what is being referred to in what they read. For instance, if a student reading a modern novel comes across a reference to a "lotus-eater," he may perhaps guess from the context that some kind of dope-fiend is meant, but the reference will be more meaningful if he recognizes the classical allusion and ties it back to his reading of the *Odyssey*. This, of course, is only a trivial example, but the import should be clear.

I should like to say at this point that all these arguments in behalf of classical studies apply, although with somewhat changed force, to studies of other ancient and modern civilizations. It is coming to be recognized today that a well-educated American ought to know something not only about classical and Western civilizations, but also about the civilizations of the Near, Middle, and Far East, for example. If

we argue that pupils should study Roman civilization, why not also recommend the study of these Eastern civilizations? If we further urge the study of classical languages, why not also urge the study of Arabic or Sanskrit? If these languages seem far away from our own culture, let me quote from a book by the Indian scholar Har Dayal, who does not hesitate to advise the study of Greek, though the relative impact of Greek civilization on Indian culture was far less than on ours:

The most valuable ancient poetry, drama, philosophy, rhetoric, biography, and history are enshrined in the subtle and supple tongue of Hellas. One of the other ancient languages may offer some masterpiece that is superior to anything in Greek; but no other ancient literature contains so much of the very best

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of everything that is needed for culture. Greek is especially valuable for modern Rationalists, as Greek philosophy is based on Science and Humanism.<sup>1</sup>

This quotation incidentally allows me a chance to reveal my personal bias in favor of Greek over any other ancient language, including Latin, but I have chosen it chiefly to demonstrate that we must not be so chauvinistic as to assume that our study of classical languages should necessarily remain within the orbit of our own cultural traditions. If a Hindu can recommend Greek, we can feel somewhat less impractical in recommending Sanskrit or Pali, I can testify that one of my most enlightening and rewarding literary experiences was to read some of the Buddhist scriptures in the original Pali.

What about the study of classical languages, as distinct from the study of civilization and literature? My chief feeling about this is that Latin and Greek should continue to be made available to those students who *want* to study Latin and Greek or who are likely to be attracted by this study. (I may say parenthetically that at present I am engaged in a study to determine ways of identifying students who have special aptitudes for language study.) The reading of a foreign language is an important intellectual experience, and the reading of a literary work in the original language is often a satisfying aesthetic experience. Many students will choose to seek such experiences through the study of Latin or Greek, although they may be just as well advised to study other languages. However, it would not seem unreasonable to expect that from a curriculum that includes the study of classical civilization and literature in translation might follow a greater demand for the languages themselves by more students motivated by genuine interest. It seems to me that the students who should study Latin or Greek, or both, are those who feel that they can derive certain benefits from such study which cannot come without a knowledge of the language. Of course, there will always be a few students interested in languages *per se*; for these, Latin and Greek are well-nigh indispensable for the study of the Indo-European languages. There will also be a few students of Latin and Greek who hope to become specialists in some field such as ancient history. Finally, the study of classical literature affords especially intriguing material for students interested in interpretation and textual

criticism. For example, I find it captivating to read, in his book on the Greek lyric poets, C. M. Bowra's attempt to track down whether Alcman, in a certain place, meant *pharos*, 'robe' or *pharos*, 'plough.' Of course, perhaps nobody really cares—but who cares whether anybody cares?

As an educational psychologist, I cannot support any arguments for Latin and Greek or any other language which are based on the doctrine of mental discipline. I wonder if students are still told, as I was when I began the study of Greek in high school, that the study of an ancient language will "strengthen the mind." Even as a high school student I was highly skeptical of any such argument; I was confident that the study of Greek would not alter whatever intellectual ability I had, either way. I was simply interested in studying Greek. Later I learned, as a student of psychology, that the psychologist E. L. Thorndike had pretty thoroughly disposed of the argument of mental discipline around 1900. Perhaps Thorndike went too far in this; still, the argument of mental discipline is one of last resort.<sup>2</sup>

I also hold that one must be extremely cautious in accepting any arguments based on the theory of transfer of training. We have often been told that the study of Latin will help us to write better, that it will produce a larger English vocabulary, that it teaches us grammar, that it will help in the study of modern foreign languages, and so forth. I have never seen any good evidence from systematic, quantitative research that the study of Latin has any of these automatic effects and benefits. I once attempted to investigate whether the study of Latin has any influence on the ability to appreciate the meanings of English words which derive from Latin, and I was truly disappointed when I found that the results were negative. Other researches have not shown any substantial advantages accruing from the study of Latin. The Classical Investigation of 1924 gave the figure of 13%, but I am not sure what this means. The evidence has thus remained largely of an anecdotal nature. For example, one of my students told me the other day that he never gained any appreciation of sentence structure in English until he studied Latin. My comment on this was that he must have had a very sensitive teacher.

From the evidence I have seen, both experimental and anecdotal, I have come to the

1. Har Dayal, *Hints for Self-Culture* (Delhi: Rajkamal Publications Ltd., 1948; also, London: C.A. Watts & Co., 1934).

2. In reply to Thorndike see W. L. Carr, "By Their Fruits," *CJ* 37 (1941-42) 334-350.

conclusion, like many others, that the study of Latin or Greek (or of any language) can have transfer values only for certain students and under certain teaching procedures. Only when such objectives as better appreciation of English grammar, or a larger vocabulary, or better ability in English composition are consciously emphasized in the instruction is there much likelihood that anyone will learn anything above and beyond the language being studied, and even then the student must have considerable intellectual capacity in order to profit in this way. It must not be forgotten that Latin grammar is not the same as English grammar, and the differences are such as to cause as much confusion as enlightenment. And in view of its syntax and style, Greek could hardly be used as a model for the casting of English sentences. Psychologists have said many times that if you want to teach English grammar, vocabulary, or composition, it can best be done directly in English without a circumambulation through Latin in which the student stands a chance of getting caught in the brambles. Of course it remains true that the student may get an additional boost when direct instruction in English is supplemented in another context such as in the study of Latin grammar. But certainly the teaching of English must not be allowed to *depend* on the teaching of Latin.<sup>3</sup>

Let us consider now the manner in which Latin or Greek is to be taught. I have recently had a good deal of contact with modern foreign language teaching. I have been extremely well impressed with those methods of teaching which

emphasize the spoken language, particularly in the first year of language learning. There seems to be considerable evidence to support the idea that fluency in reading is most likely to ensue when students are first taught to understand the spoken language. When automatic recognition of the phonemic, morphological, and syntactical signals in the spoken language is achieved by the student it seems that he can easily apply this recognition to the fluent reading of written texts. Written texts are, after all, merely representations of what was first conceived as speech, even when intended as literature. If this is true for modern languages, it is also true for classical Latin and Greek. Even after a number of years of studying Latin and Greek it was difficult for me to read these languages with true fluency, for I had been taught, not to read the language, but only to decipher and translate it. The reading of a passage was often a problem of searching through lines and lines for subjects and objects, or for a non-existent accusative noun to match an accusative past participle. It appears that I was not alone in this experience. Professor W. G. Hale, in *The Art of Reading Latin*, published in 1886, relates how he was taught to attack a Latin sentence at Phillips Exeter Academy: "First find your verb and translate it," said my teacher. "Then find your subject, and translate. Then find the modifiers of the subject, then the modifiers of the verb," etc., etc. Well, I had got more than four years beyond Exeter before I learned to read Latin with any feeling but that it was a singularly circuitous and perverted way of expressing ideas, which I could not expect to grasp until I had reformed my author's sentences and reduced them to English."

"Now, all this is wrong," Hale continues. "It is a frightful source of confusion to prawl about here and there in the sentence in a self-blinded way that would seem pathetic to a Roman, looking at things without the side-lights afforded to him by the order; and, further, it is a frightful waste of time." Hale then shows, in a manner that would endear him to a contemporary linguistic scientist, how it should be possible to read a Latin sentence straight through, "taking in all the possible constructions of every word, . . . waiting, at least, until a sure solution has been given by the sentence itself."<sup>4</sup>

Actually, I found the above quotation not

3. On transfer of training see M. E. Hutchinson, "Some Recent Research in the Teaching of Latin," *CJ* 39 (1943-44) 449-465, and the literature there cited; on the effect of Latin upon the student's knowledge and use of English, *ibid.* 453-456; also P. A. Boyer and H. C. Gordon, "Have High Schools Neglected Academic Achievement?," *School and Society* 49 (1939) 810-812; M. Dean and B. Wall, "The Value of Foreign-Language Study for Tenth-Grade Pupils," *ibid.* 51 (1940) 717-720."

My article referred to in the preceding paragraph of the text is J. B. Carroll, "Knowledge of English Roots and Affixes as Related to Vocabulary and Latin Study," *Journal of Educational Research* 34 (1940) 102-111. The figure of 13% appears in *The Classical Investigation*, Part I (Princeton 1924) 242, and refers to the following: the records of about 500 students were obtained from various types of schools; those that took Latin and those that did not take Latin had approximately the same I. Q. at the beginning of their first year of high school; after four years of high school those that had taken Latin scored 13.18% higher in all college preparatory subjects combined on the C.E.E.B. examinations than those who had not taken Latin. However, the stating of a comparison in terms of a percentage is rather unsatisfactory from a statistical point of view.

4. W. G. Hale, *The Art of Reading Latin* (Mentzer: Burk, 1887) 7-8, 12-15, quoted in *The Classical Investigation*, Part I, Appendix B, pp. 291-294.



in the original, but in an appendix to Part I of the Classical Investigation, published in 1924, nearly thirty years ago. Much of what I have said today is in exact agreement with the conclusions of that estimable investigation, but here we are about to part company. The Classical Investigation recommended against the general use of any so-called direct method in the teaching of Latin. Most of its arguments were based, it is true, on practical considerations which would still plague us today, such as the lack of suitably trained teachers, the small classes which would be made necessary by the direct method, etc. (Perhaps with the decline of enrollments today the class size would not be such an obstacle; that I don't know.) One final argument brought forth by the Classical Investigation, however, was that "the limitations of the aims of the Direct Method render the attainment of many desirable objectives largely if not wholly impossible."

It is at this point that I part company with the Classical Investigation. I would say that if you really want students to start reading Latin or Greek efficiently, the experience with modern foreign languages suggests that some sort of direct method, using the spoken language, is the best approach. *Only* a direct method, if we may call it that, renders possible the real fulfillment of the "desirable objectives" which the authors of the Classical Investigation thought would be interfered with by use of the direct method. *Only* a direct method will render immediately possible the kind of art in reading Latin which Professor Hale chanced upon years after his first encounters with subjects and verbs at Phillips Exeter.

Now, by a direct method I do not mean necessarily a method in which only Latin is spoken in the classroom. It is a question of how spoken Latin is used and practiced—*drilled*—in the classroom. Perhaps some of you are aware of a very interesting and promising venture in Latin teaching which is being conducted by Professor Waldo Sweet at the University of Michigan. I have here his *Experimental Materials, Book One* which represents in a tangible way the teaching methods which I believe should be exploited. For the first time, to my knowledge, the methods suggested by modern linguistic science and pedagogy have been applied to the teaching of Latin. In what is called "pattern practice," the student is realistically taught to respond to the signals provided by Latin morphology. For example, the student can easily tell you who is

watching who in any of the following four spoken sentences:

Vir canem spectat.  
Canis virum spectat.  
Canem vir spectat.  
Virum canis spectat.

All this is applied in easy stages to the reading of simple texts; these texts are not simple in the old sense of corresponding as closely as possible to English word order; rather, they are simple because the constructions they employ are graded in difficulty.

I cannot forecast whether Professor Sweet's method will prove more successful and efficient than others; I will venture only the assertion that in the light of experience with other languages it is more likely to do so. If it does, it seems to me a most promising lead for revitalizing instruction in the classical languages. Let us forget that classical Latin and Greek are not spoken languages; they once were, and it will not matter if we pronounce them now with a slightly inaccurate system of sounds. Let us make them *live*, if only for the purpose of enabling them to be read more easily and their literature more widely appreciated.

I must say something about the choice of literary selections to be read in secondary school Latin or Greek. Assuming that students can be taught to read these languages more efficiently and easily, I think there is still room for concern about what kinds of literary offerings we place before young students. I have never been able to understand why it has been thought, apparently by the colleges, that high school students' interest could be maintained throughout a year of Caesar, a year of Cicero, and a year of Vergil. At least, this was the fare I was offered in my own high school course. And in Greek there came to be too much of a sameness in a year of paragraphs which all seemed to begin with something like *enteuthen exelaunei ho stratêgos treis parasangas* in Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Even Homer was not the be-all and end-all of Greek literature. I have not had recent experience with what is being taught in secondary school classical languages, but I hope that, now that some of the colleges have relaxed requirements, it has been possible to introduce more variety and interest, and a better-graded sequence of texts, into secondary school teaching.

If there is any one conclusion which I should like to emphasize from this discussion, it is that the values of the classics can be enhanced and better realized, *first*, if the

classics are studied *for themselves* rather than for some mysterious transfer values they may have; and *second*, if modern teaching methods and wisely considered instructional content are adopted rather than the methods and content which by now are hallowed only by tradition.

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### A LEXICOGRAPHICAL NOTE

(*en mesôi*: Plato, *Rep.* 531A)

In a great many passages where the words *en mesôi* or *en tôi mesôi* and such like occur, commentators and translators seem to be in trouble. The suspicion is aroused that the idiomatic force of such phrases is not fully understood.

There are accepted meanings that need not concern us here. What we should like to show is that the acknowledged meaning 'in among people', 'in the midst of people' may be extended to 'in the house', 'indoors', 'within'.

Such relevant passages as the writer has been able to collect are quoted below. In none of them is it necessary that the sense 'indoors' be assigned, but in every case such a sense is appropriate and plausible.

Homer *Iliad* 20.13,15: *Dios endon* and *en mesôi* are in parallel.

Menander *Samia* 153: the cook, after Demeas has rushed madly *eisô* expresses fears for his pots *en tôi mesôi*.

Euripides *Ion* 1138: (spurious ?) describes a tent having certain dimensions [*to en*] *mesôi*, 'inside measure.'

Athenaeus 8.360C has variant readings *en tôi mesôi* and *tan esô*, which may be significant.

Theocritus 15.27: the maid is ordered to put her wool *es meson*, 'inside', 'ins Zimmer' (Fritzsche), 'away', depending whether the scene is laid outdoors or in the 'Stube' (Fritzsche).

Theocritus 21.17: 'there is no neighbor *en mesôi*, 'about', 'within'.

Herondas 6.81: the maid was grinding *en mesôi*, 'indoors' or 'while the conversation was going on'.

Gregory of Nyssa *De Anima* 235B (112 Krab): 'the soul, homeless *en tôi mesôi* will wander about' perhaps involves a double meaning

'meanwhile' and 'at home', the latter in a characteristic forced antithesis with 'homeless'.

Matthew 14:6, Luke 5:19, John 19:36 contain phrases like those in question and mean 'in (to) the middle of a room' or 'in (to) the midst of those assembled' according to Thayer, *Lex. N. T. Greek*.<sup>1</sup>

The cumulative evidence is impressive but not conclusive. If the meaning proposed did obtain, it did so in colloquial or informal discourse, and it may have become established in later Greek.

But when such a meaning is assigned in a passage where the commentators have utterly failed to make sense or agree with one another, and when such assignment yields good clear sense, one is strongly tempted to make more ambitious claims for it.

The passage in question is Plato *Republic* 531A. Here Socrates is represented as satirizing the empirical school of musicians who try to establish a new scale in terms of the smallest intervals that can be detected by the ear. He describes them in the act of testing with instruments their capacity to identify quarter-tones or still more minute gradations of tone. Glaucon recognizes the picture and says: "Heavens! yes, what a show they make of themselves with their fancy terms like *pyknômata*, straining their ears as if to catch a sound *ek geitonôn*, some professing that they have been able to distinguish a note *en mesôi*, and that this is the smallest possible interval etc."

A glance at the standard editions will convince anyone that something remains to be said about the last two Greek phrases indicated above. As the passage is obviously humorous, one will not be surprised to note that a word-play is involved. That is nothing new for Plato. Socrates' answer immediately following contains an out and out pun.

These phrases apparently have a technical meaning for the musicians. They seem also to have a different sense in common parlance.

Technical *ek geitonôn*, 'from a neighbor's instrument' or 'from a neighboring tone of the musical scale'; colloquial: 'from the neighbor-

1. Two Latin phrases may reflect a colloquial Greek original: Terence *Adelphi* 478f.: *mater virginis in mediost*, 'on hand' or 'inside'; Petronius *Satyricon* 29: after looking at pictures in the entry, the narrator asks *quas in medio picturas haberent*.

hood' or more likely, by a common ellipse, 'from the neighbors' house'.

Technical: *en mesôi* 'in between' two other notes at an orthodox interval; colloquial: 'inside', i.e. inside the neighbors' house.

Technical: the whole phrase, 'they listen attentively to detect the interval between a given note and the adjacent notes, declaring that they can hear an intermediate sound etc.'; colloquial: 'they strain their ears at the party-wall, declaring they can catch a sound indoors etc.'

Everyone recognizes the word play in *ek geitonôn*. It is contended that there is an elaborate parallel play on *en mesôi*, involving the meaning proposed here. It is not a very good joke; but at least its quadratic structure becomes apparent.

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## REVIEWS

*De Proprietate Sermonum vel Rerum: A Study and Critical Edition of a Set of Verbal Distinctions.* Edited by MYRA L. UHLFELDER. ("Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome," Vol. XV.) Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1954. Pp. vii, 116. \$4.00 (paper) \$4.50 (boards).

Precision in language has always been of vital concern to philosophers, literary men, rhetoricians, and indeed all intelligent persons. For this reason the study of verbal distinctions (*differentiae verborum*) was practically continuous from classical to modern times. The tradition moves from Plato's ludicrous hair splitter, Prodicus, to the Stoic anomalists and the Alexandrian analogists. Among the Romans, it proceeds from the elder Cato, Accius, and Lucilius to such teachers as Crates of Mallos and Aelius Stilo (the mentor of Varro and Cicero), and to Cicero himself, Julius Caesar, P. Nigidius Figulus, and Pansa. In the imperial period, if we may pass over textual commentators and writers of technical treatises, it continues to Verrius Flaccus (the Augustan scholar epitomized later by Festus and Paulus Diaconus) and the elder Pliny, and then to Gellius, Aelius Melissus, Fronto (the tutor of Marcus Aurelius), Flavius Caper, and Sacerdos. The earliest datable sets of *differentiae*, those of Charisius, Probus, and Nonius Marcellus, come from the fourth century. The tradition now takes us to the polished Sidonius

Apollinaris, the bishop Agroecius, Cassiodorus, Isidore, Bede, Alcuin, and finally the humanists. Sets of *differentiae* were extensively used throughout Europe as school texts from the ninth century to the fifteenth at least.

The present work is a study and critical edition of an anonymous set of *differentiae verborum* of peculiarly complex history. Most of these *differentiae* have to do with true synonyms. Some show the effects of Stoic etymologizing: *pecuniosus*, e.g., from *pecus*. Others are by-products of research in descriptive grammar: adjectival endings (*sceleratus*, *scelestus*, and *scelerosus*), noun endings (*largitas* and *largitio*), the voice of verbs (*fluctuo* and *fluctuor*), and verbal compounds. Still others are related to orthography: *acerbus* and *acervus*, or *avena* and *habena*.

Various other extant sets besides the one here presented—sets which range in period from the second century (Caper) to the Renaissance—are carefully discussed by our author (pp. 16-23), who examines their sources, their general methods of compilation, and their types of distinctions, in order to discover the relationship of

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these extant collections to one another and to the set here presented.

The most recent previous edition of our author's set was published by Arevalo in 1803 with the works of Isidore of Seville and reprinted by Migne in 1862 (*PL* 83, 1319-1332). Arevalo's text was based on the faulty Du Breul edition of 1601.

The present work is a model of its kind. It provides us with a conspectus of 22 manuscript versions of s. viii—xvi, Arevalo's text, and the versions of some incunabula. Each page contains Latin text, testimonia, and apparatus criticus. My generous sampling of Uhlfelder's text indicates a great improvement in accuracy and even additional evidence for Charisius' version. Though it is extremely hazardous to trace sources in the field where the earliest works have perished and where one writer frequently uses another without acknowledging his debt, our author successfully accomplishes her task. She demonstrates that her collection contains a great deal of material from the republican period—presumably transmitted by Caper, who borrowed from Pliny the Elder and Verrius Flaccus. In an appendix she also proves that the *differentiae* in the well-known *Liber Glossarum* of the eighth century are intimately related to sets already known.

Altogether a solid accomplishment.

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### BRIEF NOTICES

P. MAURICE HILL (trans.). *The Poems of Sappho*. Containing nearly all the fragments printed from the restored Greek texts, New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. Pp. xiv, 74, xv-xxii. \$6.00.

A former Oxford scholar, Philip Maurice Hill (M.A., Balliol, 1918) left at his death in 1952 a number of poetic translations of Sappho; and these have been edited and artistically printed by his friend Guido Morris by way of a memorial volume, and distributed in this country by the Philosophical Library. But the price is excessive, particularly when one realizes that the translations have sometimes not been brought into line with the printed Greek, and the Greek text (even where it is not marred with printer's errors) has, for the most part, been taken from the long outmoded section on Sappho in the volume by Edmonds in the Loeb Library.

HERRBERT MUSURILLO, S.J.

BELLARMINE COLLEGE, PLATTSBURG, N.Y.

RICHMOND LATTIMORE, REX WARNER, RALPH GLADSTONE, DAVID GRENE (trans.). *Euripides, Alcestis* [Lattimore], *Medea* [Warner], *Heracleidae* [Gladstone], *Hippolytus* [Grene]. ("The Complete Greek Tragedies.") Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955. Pp. ix, 221. \$3.75.

The four translations presented in this volume reflect

a high quality of performance, though varying widely in style and execution. Lattimore's *Alcestis* is extraordinarily successful. Permitting himself considerable freedom in form, he still preserves with remarkable fidelity the detailed meanings of the lines and the deeper meaning and atmosphere of the whole, in a version vivified with genuine poetic beauty—possibly at times a trifle more poetic and smoother than the original. Warner, in his *Medea*, evidently striving for almost literal accuracy, accomplishes this aim perhaps, but at too great a cost. The sentence structure is often noticeably clumsy and distracting, and poetic feeling is scarcely apparent. There is a curious effect of sustained sombreness and monotony throughout, with resulting failure to mirror changes of mood.

Appreciation of Gladstone's *Heracleidae* will largely hinge upon the reader's own conception of the play. If it is taken as a tragedy or a serious play, the tone of the translation will seem entirely discordant, since G. interprets the play as a melodrama. Even as such, the style and language is at times disconcertingly frivolous. Grene achieves fine results in *Hippolytus*. Very faithful to the original, his rendering carries over the unusual dramatic vitality and strength effectively. The choral lyrics are done with perceptiveness and beauty, and the handling of the rhetorical passages is particularly successful. Many, I think, would question some of Grene's interpretative remarks in his introduction to the play.

BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY

HAROLD W. MILLER

MAURICE VANHOUTTE. *La philosophie politique de Platon dans les "Lois."* ("Bibliothèque Philosophique de Louvain," 14.) Louvain: Publications Universitaires de Louvain, 1954. Pp. ix, 466. Fr. B. 195 (\$3.90).

The chief reason, it seems, why the results of this work are on the whole disappointing is the existentialist bias with which the author approaches his subject. This bias leads the author to reject, for the larger part of his work, "une méthode d'investigation directe et objective," which, he seems to imply, characterizes most of the scholarly work previously done on the *Laws*, in favor of a "méthode de l'analyse réflexive," which, he hopes, will yield a more philosophical interpretation of Plato's work than has hitherto been attained. The aim of this method is to "abandon naive intellectualism to seek, beneath the evident content of Plato's legislation, its latent content" (p. 66).

In order to discover this "latent content," the author believes the general atmosphere or "climate" of the *Laws* must be established above all else: Plato's explicit statements cannot be altogether relied upon; it is necessary to read between the lines and supply basic factors which Plato himself ignored. As a result, much is made of the incompleteness of the *Laws*, both in the sense that Plato died before he had finished his work and in the sense that, as Plato himself knew, any published code of laws must have deficiencies by its very nature. Both senses of incompleteness are responsible for the well-known repetitions, contradictions, and other difficulties found in the *Laws*, which the author ably discusses but often unduly magnifies. The ultimate reason for these shortcomings is, in the view of the author, the dualism in Plato's desire to be, on the one hand, scientific and rational, and, on the other, to be realistic and practical in adapting his legislation to the irrational human material which it is to govern.

The existence of this Platonic dualism can hardly be denied; but in his unbending insistence upon it, Vanhoutte does not seem to this reviewer to build a significant or convincing "climate" out of it, so that he sheds great doubt



upon the value of his method of reflective analysis for the study of the *Laws*. In fact, the author seems at his best when he forgets about his method and adopts the "direct and objective method" which he does not like. Passages such as the comparison of the myth of Cronos in the *Statesman* and its treatment in the *Laws* (Part III, ch. ii) reveal that he has a good sensitivity for the Greek and for Plato's thought, and one wishes that this kind of analysis predominated in this work over attempts to discover the "climate" of the *Laws*.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

MARTIN OSTWALD

SOLOMON KATZ. *The Decline of Rome and the Rise of Mediaeval Europe*. ("The Development of Western Civilization.") Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1955. Pp. ix, 164; 2 maps. \$1.25.

This is the second of two volumes on Rome, which will ultimately form only a small part of a series of texts in an extravagant venture. The first volume, C. G. Starr, Jr.'s *The Emergence of Rome as Ruler of the Western World* (Ithaca 1950), was reviewed in this journal by R. S. Rogers (CW 44 [1950-51] 155); the reservations there expressed about the efficacy of writing texts for each week of a semester course covering the period from the beginning of western civilization to the end of the eighteenth century must be repeated here. It seems extremely unlikely that a student who is handed this volume without any previous knowledge of the Roman Empire will, at the end of a seven day period, know very much more than when he began. This in spite of the fact that Professor Katz's contribution is quite sound and generally very readable. It attempts to be both easy and detailed,

and the former virtue is invariably overwhelmed by the latter.

Errors in fact are quite rare, although some statements are apt to be misleading; for example, on p. 26 we read, "For nearly a hundred years before the death of Marcus Aurelius the emperors had tried to select their successors on the basis of merit and ability. But when Marcus reverted to the dynastic principle of succession in place of the 'choice of the best,' he paved the way for corruption and misrule which brought in their train civil war, bloodshed, and military despotism." Mention could have been made that none of Marcus' predecessors had natural heirs, and adoption was thus a necessity. Again, p. 34, "the romantic queen Zenobia" is surely likely to call forth visions of a latter-day Cleopatra.

But these are minor strictures. The brief chapter on the decline and fall presents in fine fashion the nature of the problem; the second half of the book struck one reader as considerably better than the first. Together with F. W. Walbank's *The Decline of the Roman Empire in the West*, this volume makes available two good brief examinations, on different levels, to be sure, of the collapse of Rome. We can only regret that the purpose for which it was written appears an impossible one.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

HERBERT W. BENARIO

FRIEDRICH ZUCKER. *Isokrates' Panathenaios*. ("Berichte über die Verhandlungen der sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philol.-Hist. Kl., Bd. 101, Heft 7.") Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1954. Pp. ii, 31. DM 1.50.

An inconclusive analysis of this puzzling work. Against

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von Arnim, Z. feels that large sections, and particularly the apparent contradictions between proemium and middle part, are influenced by the shifting political alignments of the day. As for the final part, with its emphasis on esoteric meaning, Z. refers to section 240 and makes *amphibolia*, comparable to the *eivónēia* of Socrates, responsible for the argument. Isocrates falls back on this, for him, novel device to solve a dilemma. The nature of this dilemma, and the reasons for it, i.e. why Isocrates decides he must retract his condemnation of Sparta, Z. prefers not to guess.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON T. G. ROSENMEYER

VLADIMIR I. GEORGIEV. *Problèmes de la langue minoenne.* (In Russian, with summary in French.) (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Division of Linguistics, Ethnology, and Literature.) Sofia: Izdanie Bolgarskoi Akademii Nauk, 1953. Pp. 196. 20 leva.

VLADIMIR I. GEORGIEV. *État actuel de l'interprétation des inscriptions créto-mycéniennes.* (In Russian, with summary in French.) (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Division of Linguistics, Ethnology, and Literature.) Sofia: Izdanie Akademii Nauk, 1954. Pp. 96. 8 leva.

In the 1953 publication Professor Georgiev, writing before the appearance of Ventris' and Chadwick's successful decipherment of Minoan Linear B, but basing his work on the same fundamental assumption as they, that the language is Greek, established phonetic values for some 80 signs of the Linear B syllabary. In about a dozen instances these values coincide with those subsequently established by Ventris and Chadwick. In the second publication, written with their results before him, Georgiev abandons all but a fraction of his previous identifications, acknowledging with the most disarming generosity the complete conviction carried by the work of his rivals.

In examining the "present state" of studies on the Linear B inscriptions he offers some criticism of Ventris' work; he refuses, for example, to accept the Ventris-Chadwick "assumed rules of Mycenaean orthography," and disapproves of the inconsistency of admitting a series of voiced dentals, when no distinction is otherwise made among voiced, unvoiced, and aspirate consonants. The most valuable portion of Georgiev's work will be for most readers the "Lexicon of the Creto-Mycenaean Inscriptions" at the end, given for the most part in the Ventris transcription, but rather inconsistently partly in his own modified system. This includes also some conjectures of L. R. Palmer, A. Furumark, G. Björk, and Georgiev himself. The lexicon, however, is by no means complete even for the texts of the Knossos and Pylos tablets, and of course appeared too early to include the documents from Mycenae.

Methodologically Georgiev's work is marred by adherence to some basically erroneous positions which Ventris, using the strict methods of scientific cryptanalysis, brilliantly avoided. Thus, for example, by insisting on using the Linear A inscriptions of Hagia Triadha he obtains a non-homogeneous body of material at the outset, since the Linear A documents are quite certainly written in a non-Greek language. He is almost slavishly dependent on the Cypriote syllabary, both for values and for writing procedures; and he also relies heavily on an assumed pedigree of the classical Greek alphabet from the Phoenician, itself derived from the Minoan A syllabary. This unfortunate postulate allows him to make use of the dangerous and completely discredited acrophonic principle, with distressing results. He is also quite willing to admit multiple phonetic values for the same sign—a position which can only lead to unscientific subjectivity and ultimate chaos.

It is difficult to believe that even the industry and great learning of Professor Georgiev would ever, with these methods, have reached an intelligible solution of the Minoan problem.

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

W. EDWARD BROWN

H. IDRIS BELL. *Cults and Creeds in Graeco-Roman Egypt.* (The Forwood Lectures for 1952.) New York: Philosophical Library, 1953. Pp. vi, 117. \$4.75.

In four lectures the author gives a compressed but lucid account of the interaction between Greek and Egyptian religions, their relations with Judaism in Egypt, and the further direction the resulting amalgam took as it met and succumbed to Christianity. Insofar as Bell permits an overall theme to his book it is the similar progress of the different traditions towards a personal and redemptive religion, with the ultimate victory of Christianity depending on the appeal of the doctrines of Incarnation and Atonement.

There is little in detail that is new. Rather the book serves to bring together and present to a wider audience the results of specialized research (including the author's own) in less accessible journals and, especially, in the *arcana* of papyrological publications. Bell's primary interest here is "in the beliefs and ideas which underlay religious observance" (p. 51). Inevitably, then, it is in early Christianity and in the voluble, syncretistic thought of later antiquity that such an interest can best be satisfied. To do as much for more popular and less vocal paganism is difficult, and perhaps impossible, though one would have thought the nature of evidence in Graeco-Roman Egypt more favorable to such an attempt than elsewhere in the ancient world. Not a little of the material is presented here and most of the comment is unexceptionable, but somehow the pieces do not seem to fall together to form a convincing picture. Thus, after a discussion of the "externals of religious organization," as the author himself describes it, we arrive at the "ossification of Egyptian cults." No doubt the phrase is accurate but we do not see how or why this comes about. (Incidentally, the Egyptians have rather a bad time of it: at least twice we are told of their crude and simple minds; one may also wonder at the use of "pogrom" for the pagan persecution of Jews in A.D. 38.)

Possibly greater attention to the history of society, about which he is certainly able to tell us much, would have made the changing character of the religious experience of both Greek and Egyptian more understandable. But no ungrateful remarks on what he does not do can detract from the great deal he does. The writing is clear and pleasant and, where his sympathies are engaged, eloquent.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

M. H. JAMESON

## NOTES AND NEWS

The *New York Classical Club* will hold its final meeting of the current academic year on Saturday, May 5, 1956, in the Faculty Dining Room of Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue, New York City, at 2:30 P.M. The speaker will be Professor James A. Notopoulos of Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., currently Visiting Professor at Princeton University. His topic will be "Ho-

mer's Recitation of His Epics in the Light of the Singing of Heroic Songs in the Balkans."

Luncheon at 1:00 P.M. will be followed by a brief business meeting. The agenda includes a report on the current publicity campaign, the annual report of the Secretary-Treasurer, a resolution honoring Professor Gilbert Murray on his ninetieth birthday, and the election of officers for the coming year.

The Eighty-Ninth Regular Meeting of the Managing Committee of the *American School of Classical Studies at Athens* will be held at Columbia University, New York City, on Saturday, May 12, 1956.

Among the important items of business to be discussed at this meeting will be the Reports of the Chairman and Director. There will also be Reports on the Agora, the Agora Museum and the Landscaping of the Agora. Especially important will be the discussion concerning the celebrations in Athens this summer. The Personnel Committee will present various nominations.

The thirty-second annual Greek festival at *Cedar Crest College*, Allentown, Pa., will feature

the presentation of Sophocles' *Electra*. The all-student production will be seen in the outdoor Cedar Crest Greek theater, May 18, 1956, at 6:00 P.M. and May 19 at 2:30 P.M. Plans include taking the play indoors in case of rain. An invitation to attend is extended to all who are interested.

The Homeric Academy of *Regis High School*, New York City, will present a symposium on Homer's *Iliad* on Sunday, May 20, 1956, at 2:30 P.M., in the Regis Auditorium, 60 East 85th St. The public is invited to attend.

A panel of Regis' students will be examined by guest professors and by members of the audience on all aspects of the poem: Greek text, translation, analysis, and on questions of Homeric interest.

The guest examiners will be: Dr. Mabel Lang, Bryn Mawr College; Mr. A. Michalopoulos, Royal Greek Embassy; Prof. James A. Notopoulos, Trinity College; Prof. Antony E. Raubitschek, Princeton University; Rev. James H. Reid, S.J., Fordham University; and Prof. C. Bradford Welles, Yale University.

#### ULYSSES

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Iliada, opus notissimum, scripsit.

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The *American Academy in Rome* has announced the award of the following Rome Prize Fellowships in classics for the academic year 1956-57:

William A. Arrowsmith, University of California, Riverside; Eric C. Baade, Yale University; Dorothy Ann Freeman, Radcliffe College; Elaine P. Loeffler, New York University; William R. Tongue, University of Oklahoma.

The *National Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Program* of the Association of Graduate Schools in the Association of American Universities has announced the appointment of the following Woodrow Wilson Fellows in classics for the academic year 1956-57 (the institution at which the recipient proposes to study is noted in parentheses):

Alfred B. Blackburn, Yale (Harvard); H. Don Cameron, University of Michigan (Princeton); Walter R. Connor, Hamilton (Princeton); James A. Coulter, Harvard (University of Chicago); David F. Dorsey, Jr., Haverford (Univer-

sity of Michigan); Miriam T. Dressler, Barnard (Radcliffe); Robert R. Holloway, Amherst (University of Pennsylvania); Stephen Schneiderman, Princeton (Harvard); Richard H. Stone, University of California [Berkeley] (Harvard); Benny R. Tucker, Birmingham Southern (Washington University).

## BOOKS RECEIVED

MCCARTHY, BARBARA P. (ed.). *Elizabeth Barrett to Mr Boyd: Unpublished Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Hugh Stuart Boyd*. New Haven: Yale University Press (for Wellesley College), 1955. Pp. xxxix, 299. \$5.00.

Hugh Stuart Boyd (1781-1848), translator of classical and Christian Greek poets. The letters cover the period 1827-1847. Full index.

METZGER, HENRI. *St. Paul's Journeys in the Greek Orient*. Translated by S. H. HOOKE. ("Studies in Biblical Archaeology," No. 4.) New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. Pp. 75; 12 pl.; 4 maps. \$2.75.

French original: *Les routes de Saint Paul dans l'Orient grec* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1954).

2nd Printing

### MOMENTS WITH (and WITHOUT) HORACE

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by Gardner Wade Earle

(Formerly) Lecturer in Classical Greek at Cleveland College  
of Western Reserve University

Some of the ODES of Horace translated into English verse and parodied into American slang.

Most of these translations and parodies have appeared in THE CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER during the past fifteen years. Many of them have been read over Cleveland Radio Broadcasting Stations. They have been used as the basis for lectures and programs before college groups and The Ohio Poetry Society.

The collection now available is in the form of a brochure. Every copy is autographed by the author.

#### SOME WORDS WITH (and WITHOUT) PRAISE

Hence: Dwight Sedgwick, author of *Horace, a Biography*:

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Dr. E. B. de Sauze, Former Director of Foreign Languages, Cleveland, Ohio, Schools:

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Professor Randolph Randall, Head of English Department, Fenn College, Cleveland, Ohio:

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Dr. Lillian B. Lawler, Editor of THE CLASSICAL OUTLOOK:

This is a completely charming little book. Subtitled "Twenty-two of the Odes of Horace, Translated into Verse with Horace and Worse without Horace," it presents on facing pages a serious translation of a Horatian ode in verse, and a jocular, modernized version of the same poem in a lighter jingle. Among the odes chosen for translation are the *Parvus deorum cultor*, the *Persicos odi*, the "Ship of State," the *Postume*, the "Golden Mean," and the spring song to Vergilius. The serious translations are dignified and pleasing. The tone of the lighter versions may be indicated by some of their titles: "To a Sinner (who ain't been to church lately)", "I wonder Who's Kissing Her Now" (the *Pyrrha* poem); "Time Marches On"; "Thass Wha' Hoppens" (the "Sorry Log" poem); "Ain't This Cozy?" (the *Soracte* ode).

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